

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SERMON

WHICH IS THE SEVENTH UPON THE FIFTH CHAPTER

- 22** But the fruit of the spirit are love, joy, peace, patientness, gentleness, goodness, faith,
- 23** Meekness, temperance, against such things there is no Law.
- 24** Now they that are of Christ, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lutes thereof.
- 25** If we live after the spirit, let us also walk after the spirit.
- 26** Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, and envying one another. — ^{<480522>} GALATIANS 5:22-26

WE HAVE SEEN heretofore, that if we be willing to serve God, we shall find enough wherewith to occupy ourselves in chastising our vices, if every of us consider to how much corruption and sinfulness he is subject. And Saint Paul hath purposely set afore us the sins that reign in us by nature, to the intent we might know whereupon to set our minds to frame ourselves aright to the obeying of God. For we see how men busy themselves about trifling things in showing themselves willing to serve God: they trudge to and fro without end or measure. Howbeit, all is but vain and unprofitable labor, according as we see in the Popedom [*papal government*], where men give the name of God's service to a sort of toys that they have devised of their own brain. And yet in all those things though they like never so well of them, and glory in them never so much, there is nought else but vanity, and in the meanwhile they never pass of coming to the principal: for the world doth always seek windlasses [*decoys*]. But God setteth the right way before us in his law: and if we intend to go forward to the true perfection unfeignedly [*genuinely*], we must begin at the forsaking of ourselves, because there is no wisdom in us that is not cursed, no thought that is not wicked, nor no desire that is not forward and corrupted. For this cause Saint Paul told us before, that if men be minded to order their life well, first they shall find enough to occupy

themselves withal, if every man consider what a number of entangled and wicked lusts he hath in him to be cut up: which thing will not be done out of hand. And also Saint Paul spake these words purposely to such as busied themselves about the Ceremonies of the law. For although they said generally that the things which God had commanded were to be fulfilled: yet the chief things that they made account of, were Circumcision and the Ceremonies. Now hereupon Saint Paul telleth us that God will have us occupied about greater matters: that is to wit, he will have us to fight manfully against the great number of things that turn us aside from the right way. And now he addeth on the contrary part, *that the fruits of the spirit are lovingness, mildestness, gentleness, meekness, staidness, and such other like things*, and that when all things are thus well ruled, the law hath no more power over us, for we be set free from it, because our Lord Jesus Christ who hath exempted us from it, governeth us. To be short, the mark that he shooteth at, is that Christians should be free from the bondage of the law. Not all those which have the name of Christianity in their mouth, or which make their brags of it: but such as show by their deeds that they be members of our Lord Jesus Christ, inasmuch as they be begotten again by his holy spirit. For men's lives must be answerable thereunto, or else all their protestations are nothing worth, yea and they shall be proved Liars, unless it appear by their works that they speak truly and unfeignedly [*genuinely*]. Besides this, whereas Saint Paul saith that all virtues, all goodness, and all commendable things are fruits of the spirit: thereby he confirmeth the thing that I told you heretofore: which is, that if there be any one drop of goodness in us, the same is not of our own growing, neither can we challenge the praise of it, without doing wrong and injury unto God. For they be all of them fruits of his grace, and he is fain [*pleased*] to put them into us by his holy spirit. Ye see then that here again we be humbled, to the end that none of us should deceive himself in thinking that he hath any virtue or staidness, or lovingness, or any other like thing of his own. For until such time as God have shaped us new again, we be like a piece of ground that is barren yea and stark naught. For we not only bear not any good thing: but also bring forth exceeding much evil, till our Lord have rid us of it: like a naughty ground, which not only is unprofitable to the owner in that it yieldeth him neither corn, wine, nor other necessary things: but also bringeth forth thistles, thorns, and wicked weeds. Even at the same point are we. And now we have to mark,

(according also as Saint Paul hath declared heretofore) that love is the sum and substance of the law: which he hath set down here in the foremost rank, not to make us forget the calling upon God, nor the affiance which we ought to have in all his promises, and the whole service that is contained in the first table of the law. Saint Paul holdeth not scorn of those things, neither would he have them rejected, but the matter that he treateth of, is how men may give sure proof to the worldward, whether they be rightly minded to the obeying of God or no. And I have told you already, that such proof is seen by our loving of our neighbors, when we be not given every man to his own profit, but labor in common to nourish good peace and unity, and put to our helping hand also so far as God giveth us ability and means wherewith to do them good to whom we be bound by his word. Thus ye see why Saint Paul setteth down the word *Love* in the first place. It is not to the intent we should so love our neighbors, that God should be thrust back behind us: but because that in having mutual love and friendship one with another, we show ourselves to be rightly given and dedicated to god: which thing cannot be without putting of our whole trust in him, nor without resorting unto him by prayer and supplication. Furthermore seeing that all the things which bear the name of virtue, and are justly commended among men, are called the fruits of the spirit: surely it is much more likely that when we should come unto God, and be armed against all temptations, and be earnest in praying by means of faith, we be not ready for it if the holy Ghost work not in us. Then of natural inclination there is not anything in us whereby we take hold of the doctrine of the Gospel: neither are we so lightsome as to mount up unto God, to talk familiarly with him by prayer and supplication, but the holy Ghost must dispose us to it, by enlightening our hearts with his grace, and by moving our hearts to call upon him. Lo what we have to remember here. Now whereas Saint Paul matcheth joy with love, it is not only to do us to understand that we shall be quiet to Godward, and have cheerful hearts, when he shall have received us to mercy and showed himself to favor us: but he speaketh of another kind of joy, which is that there be no heartburning among us to make us lower one at another, nor spite to withdraw us from our neighbors: but that we be gentle and fellowlike, yea and that we be glad when we can aid and succor them that have need of us. In ^{<451417>}Romans 14:17 Saint Paul saith, that the kingdom of heaven is joy of spirit: howbeit he taketh that word in another meaning. For we may

rejoice in God when he witnesseth unto us that he receiveth us for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and without that, we must needs be vexed and turmoiled with such unrest, as we shall live in continual trouble. It is true that the despisers of God do sport themselves as much as may be in their jollity: but yet have they never any rest or joy: for they be fain [*willing*] to suffer much heartburning inwardly, and God doth so sting them with sundry heartbitings, as they be always in heaviness and vexation: insomuch that when they would be merry, they be fain [*willing*] to play the brute beasts, and to shake off all understanding, so as the discerning of good and evil is quit and clean daunted in them. Now it is cursed joy when men stray away after that fashion from God, and forget what they be. But (as I have told you already) Saint Paul speaketh here of the joy that we have in being conversant with our neighbors. And after the same manner also is the word faith taken: that is to wit for faithfulness and soundness of heart. There is a faith that respecteth God, and that is the sure belief which we have of his promises, according whereunto it is said (^{<450501>}Romans 5:1) that we be justified by faith, because it appeareth that God abolisheth and mortifieth in us whatsoever is of our own nature. Therefore [in that faith] we must be grounded upon God's only mercy which is shown us in our Lord Jesus Christ. But how come we to the possessing of so great a benefit? By trusting unto God's promises, and by receiving them with all obedientness, acknowledging ourselves to be damned and forlorn, and resting only upon him. Ye see then that our faith which respecteth God, is an assurance which we conceive of his goodness and love towards us, to the end we may preace [*press*] unto him, not doubting but that he heareth us. And for that cause also Saint Paul saith, that those which have such faith, do trust boldly in God, and therewithal do also freely and boldly pray unto him. But in this present text, Saint Paul taketh faith for the faithfulness which we perform one to another when we walk uprightly, so as we go not about to deceive our neighbor through lewdness or subtlety, nor use any double dealing, nor any dissimulation to wind about the simple, but do the same to other folk which we would have done to ourselves. Thus ye see how Saint Paul meaneth that faith is a fruit of the spirit. Now he addeth *Meekness and gentleness*, because that without them it were impossible that there should be any unity or concord among us. For if every man should be terrible and void of gentleness, it were much better for us that we were wild beasts.

Therefore we must show a willingness to communicate with those to whom God hath linked us. To be short, Love is maintained by this meekness, goodness, and gentleness whereof Saint Paul speaketh here. And now immediately he addeth, *Temperance* [or *staidness*.] which is not only an abstaining from other men's goods, but also a sober behavior, and a keeping of ourselves from all looseness, excess, and outrage. To be short, Saint Paul hath set down these virtues which he rehearseth, for Christians, as if he should say, that if we be governed by the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, it may well be seen and judged by our life, forasmuch as we shall be so held in awe, that we shall not run at rovers [*randomly, without definite aim*] as these loose livers do, but we shall be charitable and kindhearted one to another, so as there shall be no wrangling, no guile, nor no extortion in us, but every of us shall content himself with his own, and endeavor to serve one another's turn. But yet notwithstanding we see that all good cometh of God's spirit. Nevertheless we see also that our Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain out of which we must draw. And that if we be his, and belong unto him as members of his body, he will show in all our whole life, that his receiving of us, and his avowing of us to be his children, is not in vain. Hereupon Saint Paul concludeth, *that against such virtues, (or against the men that are endued with them) the law hath no power nor force at all.* And therefore he saith in ^{<540109>} 1 Timothy 1:9, that the Law is not given to the righteous, but to the unrighteous, and to such as rush out into offenses and misdealings. Then if the deceivers that troubled the Church at that time, had known well what is the end of the Law and the Gospel: they would not have presumed to bring the faithful in bondage after that fashion. And therefore Saint Paul scorning their hypocrisy which was matched with shamelessness, showeth that they pretended great zeal of the Law, and yet bewrayed [*revealed*] all manner of wickedness and contempt of God in their life: like as nowadays the Hypocrites in the Popedom [*papal government*] cry out loud against us, that we overthrow all good works, and intend to bring in a licentiousness of all evil, and to thrust out all desire of serving God. And why so? Because we uncase men out of all their fond presumption and self-estimation, and show them that there is none other means to trust in God, than by resting upon his mere goodness in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We say flatly that all that ever is termed by the name of merit or desert, is stark abomination before God. Forsomuch as they bear themselves in hand that they be their own

Saviors. Ye see then that all loftiness of man is pulled down by our doctrine. But yet doth not that import, that every man should take leave to do lewdly, and have no more care of serving God, nor of standing in awe of him. But contrariwise we say that Jesus Christ is given unto us, not only to the end we might obtain forgiveness of our sins at God's hand by his means: but also to the end that being regenerated by his holy spirit, we should walk in newness of life. And now in sooth [*truth*] what manner of men are they that maintain the desert of good works so stoutly? We see there is nothing but all kind of cursed filthiness in their whole life. For if a man would seek for scoffers that are altogether unholy, and never have so much as any one feeling that ever they shall come to account, but are utterly doted by Satan: surely those are even they. Again, when as they magnify good works: what are the things that they would have men to give themselves unto. To babble much, to go to matins and evensong, to trot from altar to altar, to worship puppets, to deck them trim, to buy store of pardons, to gad [*go wandering*] on pilgrimage, and (to be short) to mock God to his face, as though all the service of God were but a play of young children. True it is that they dare not say but it is a good and commendable thing to be discrete, chaste, sober, and so forth: but yet they can easily forbear all those things, so a man keep their superstitions. To be short, all God's commandments are thrust underfoot, and as it were trodden upon, and to their seeming it is no devotion nor holiness, except a man do all their gay gewgaws [*trinkets, showy trifles*] and things of nothing. Thus ye see how the contention that Saint Paul had in his time, endureth still at this day. And for that cause he saith, that if his adversaries against whom he disputeth, will maintain God's Law, they must consider well to whom it speaketh, and they must begin at themselves: and that if they intend to make good scholars, they must teach them soberness, meekness, chastity, patience, and such other things, and moreover to renounce all their own wicked lusts. These (saith Saint Paul) are the true exercises wherein it behooveth us to employ all our endeavor. And in the meanwhile let us not shut the gate against God's children, in bereaving them of the privilege that God hath given them. For when he governeth them by his holy spirit, he will not have them subject anymore to the yoke of the Law. Now thereupon Saint Paul addeth, *that all they which are in Jesus Christ, have crucified their flesh, with the lusts thereof*. Here he showeth that he intendeth not to have a fleshly liberty, and such a one as the despisers of

God abuse that he requireth chiefly, that such as talk of Christian liberty, should show indeed that they have crucified all their lusts and concupiscences, to the intent thereby to prove themselves the true members of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this is needful for us: to the end we may hold us to the lawful order and mark which God pointeth us to, when we would know what true liberty is. Nowadays there are many Christians from the teeth outward, as far as comes to the eating of flesh upon Fridays and in Lenton: they can well enough mock at the pelting toys of papistry: they can well enough say, that if any restraint be made of one thing or other under pain of deadly sin, it is but an abuse and mockery: and they say truth, so they build upon a good and sure foundation. But what? they that are so great talkers, know no whit of our Lord Jesus Christ's office and power: they know not why he came down into the world, nor what grace he imparteth unto us by his Gospel: they know not, neither what faith nor what prayer is: and yet for all that, they will needs have leave to do what they list [*wish*], and that folk should lay the bridle loose in their neck. Of these wild Christians there are too many nowadays. In the meanwhile the doctrine of God is blamed by their means. For the enemies of the truth upbraid us with all such as are loose livers nowadays, and say that the same springeth of our preaching. For this cause Saint Paul hath answered his adversaries, and also armed and fenced us to answer them, to the end to stop the mouths of all railers, and of all such as do falsely slander the doctrine of the Gospel. First of all therefore when the wicked sort say, that we give an inordinate liberty to all such as seek nothing but to do lewdly: Let us look back to Saint Paul, who telleth them that the liberty which we speak of, serveth for none but such as are a law to themselves, namely through the working of the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. But yet notwithstanding this ought to serve for a warning to all such as imagine a liberty after their own liking. Therefore let them understand, that first of all it behooveth them to become members of our Lord Jesus Christ. Will we then eat quietly without making any grudge of conscience? Will we be exempted from all these toys which do nowadays vex the simple and ignorant sort in the Papacy? Let us understand what Jesus Christ is, and let us be thoroughly his. Let him govern us, and let his death and passion show their power and effectualness in our whole life. Thus ye see what we have to bear in mind in this text. And here Saint Paul showeth again, that the true perfection of

God's children consisteth in abasing themselves, so as they follow not the rule of their own brain and affections: for we be utterly corrupted. Then can we not be but rebels against God all the time of our life, till we have killed all the sinfulness of our own nature. Mark this for one point, that our life shall never be framed to the will of God, except we be utterly changed, both in our thoughts, and in our affections. Secondly, Saint Paul showeth that that cannot be done, but by communicating with our Lord Jesus Christ: for it is not without cause that he useth this word *Crucified*. For thereby he declareth, that so long as we be separated from our Lord Jesus Christ, and cast off from him, and not knit unto him by faith, our nature will always bring forth her own fruits, that is to say, nothing but all manner of naughtiness and vice. Thus ye see that first of all Freewill is beaten down. Secondly it is showed us that we cannot be partakers of any of God's gifts, nor of his holy spirit, but by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ, according as I have told you already, that we must all draw of his fullness, for he is the only fountain that is able to suffice us. And if we seek never so far about elsewhere, we shall find nothing but dearth [*drought*] and we shall continue athirst still: and if we think to fill ourselves, it will be but windiness and misweening [*wrong thinking*], wherewith we shall burst, and yet not gather any good nourishment or substance. Now hereupon Saint Paul concludeth, that if we live after the spirit, we should also walk after the spirit. And it is a more easy declaration of the thing that I have touched already. It had been enough to have avouched that we cannot be set free, but by crucifying all our wicked lusts: howbeit forasmuch as men's Hypocrisy is so great, that they do always find startingholes, and every man would be esteemed as an Angel, though his life be out of order: therefore Saint Paul intended for a confirmation to add this saying, *that if we live after the spirit, we must therewithal walk after the spirit*. As if he should say, that it is not enough for men to protest themselves to have God's spirit dwelling in their heart: but they must show that he is there: for he is not idle. Therefore if a man will discern whether God's spirit dwell in us or no, he must come to our works and to our life: and according as our conversation is, so may he see what we be, and what is within us, and give judgment by our outward works that are apparent. As for example, if one would bear me in hand that a block were a living a man to see to: It stirreth neither head nor foot: thrust at it, and shove at it, and yet there appeareth no life in it: and shall

he then make me believe that a piece of stone removeth from place to place, or hath any power in it, or is a creature that hath a soul? Even so is it with those that boast themselves to be spiritual. For although the unbelievers and enemies of God be alive as in respect of the body: yet are they dead in respect of the heavenly life, because their soul is utterly corrupted: but we live to Godward through the grace of his holy spirit. And if this grace be in us, it cannot be idle, as I said afore. And that is the cause why Saint Paul saith, that our conversation will show whether we live in the spirit or no. The word *walk* is very rife in the holy scripture, when the whole ordering of our life is mentioned: nevertheless here is not only walking. The word that Saint Paul useth importeth more: that is to wit, to walk orderly, as if he should say, that we must frame ourselves to the thing that is conformable to the will of God, and of his holy spirit, and that our life must be so well ruled, as it may be known that God governeth us indeed, and that our Lord Jesus Christ holdeth us to himself as the members of his body, and that he hath truly witnessed that he dwelleth in us by his holy spirit. Therefore at a word, this thing must needs be known. Now to be short, Saint Paul meant here to bewray [*expose*] the hypocrisy of all such as make fair protestation with their mouth, and would have men to believe wondrous well of their zeal: and yet in all their whole life do show that they have no mind at all to come near God, nor any awe of his word. All such folk then are here condemned of lying and unfaithfulness. And therefore that we may discern which are God's children, let us come to the examining of our lives. True it is (as I have touched heretofore) that sometimes the ignorant wretches and such as never had any instruction in the Law, shall have some appearance of virtue. But if a man sound them thoroughly, he shall find it is but a shadow, and that they be not well bent, either to love their neighbors, or to walk according to God's will. To be short the examining of our life cannot lie. And herewithal Saint Paul meant also to confirm the thing that he spake afore: that is to wit, that if our life be to be governed by God's spirit, then must we travel earnestly that way, and not in trifling things that are neither here nor there before God: according as I have declared already, that such as will needs be most devout, have neither end nor measure of their superstitions: and when evening cometh they think God to be greatly beholden to them for their traveling to and fro, and yet notwithstanding all is but lost labor. And therefore Saint Paul telleth us,

that sith [*since*] we know that our life is spiritual (as truth is) and that God also is a spirit: we must understand also that he will be served faithfully, and that men must not occupy themselves about small trifles which are but as children's babbles: but that he will have us to use faithfulness, love, peace, and concord one with another, so as there be no deceit, no malice, nor no ravin [*pillage, preying*] among us. Then if we know that the life which God alloweth, and whereby we be joined unto him, is a spiritual life: Let us forthwith (saith he) walk in the spirit, that is to say, let us assure ourselves that God alloweth not anything but that which is agreeable to his Law (which for the same cause is called spiritual by Saint Paul in the seventh to the Romans) and let the proof of the same doctrine show itself in our conversation. So now whereas other folks run on pilgrimage: let us occupy ourselves in the serving of God, and our neighbors. Whereas these wretched hypocrites waste all their substance in Idolatry: let us consider that the true sacrifices and holy offerings which God requireth of us, are that we should be dedicated unto him both in body and soul, and secondly that we should so dispose the goods that he hath given us and put into our hands as we might show by effect that we hold them of him: and so forth of all the rest. Thus, ye see in effect what Saint Paul meant to say. Herewithal he toucheth the heinousest vices that reigned too much among the Galatians, saying, *Let us not be desirous of vainglory, to snatch and bite one another, and to bear malice one to another.* Undoubtedly as soon as men fall to advancing of themselves, by and by the whole doctrine of God must be corrupted: yea and a man may easily perceive that they which pretended great zeal of the Law in hindering Saint Paul, and [which pretend the same to hinder] all the faithful servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, were led of a foolish ambition through a desire to purchase themselves credit and reputation among men. For this cause Saint Paul toucheth them here again. But yet therewithal he hath an eye to all such as he writeth unto, to the intent to rid them of the letts [*hindrances*] that hindered them to receive the pure doctrine of the Gospel simply. Then let us mark well that we shall never be good disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, except all vaingloriousness be beaten down in you. For ambition or vainglory, that is to say, the fond desire to be exalted among men, is above all other the deadliest plague that can be among such as have the charge of teaching. For they cannot but give over themselves to all evil, when they be so tossed with the wind, seeking nothing else but to

purchase some fame or renown among men, and to be well liked of. But before we pass further, let us mark that the scripture condemneth all glorying as vain and perverse, when men will needs seek estimation in themselves. The Heathen men call it Vainglory when he that is a poor silly fool, will needs make himself a jolly fellow, when a poor beggar will pretend to be rich, and when a lozell [*worthless, good for nothing person*] that hath neither handsomeness, nor skill, or honesty in him, takes stoutly upon him, and will needs be counted wise, outfacing folks with a stern countenance, so as they dare not look upon him for fear lest he should cast up the collops [*pieces of meat, folds of fat flesh*] of his gross stomach. Therefore when men do set such a face upon matters, and disguise themselves after that fashion to beguile the world: the Paynims [*Pagans, Heathens*] say it is fond and foolish vainglory. But the holy Ghost proceedeth yet further: saying that although we be of great wisdom and discretion, although we have great plenty of riches, although we be endued with great virtues, and although we have all that is possible to make us renowned: yet if we take it to ourselves, our glory is vain glory. And why? Because we be traitors in robbing God of his due honor. For seeing that God reserveth all to himself, it is an ungracious glory that men take upon them, when they presume to glory and brag of themselves. Wherefore let us learn to purge ourselves of this vice that we may yield all praise unto God, because we know that all good proceedeth of him, according as we have seen heretofore that he which is wise must notwithstanding not glory in himself, nor he also that is rich, but all the estimation of man must be beaten down, and God be looked at a far off, and all of us both great and small must acknowledge that we have all things of him, and want all things in ourselves, and that when he hath once begun, he must also finish it, and that there is none of us all but he hath many blemishes in him, and that we have nothing to glory of, but that God receiveth us to mercy, and moreover so governeth us by his holy spirit, as it may appear plainly that we be not destitute of his grace. Now I have told you already that we cannot be disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, except we be well cleansed of our naughty corruption. And therefore Saint Paul directeth his words to the whole Church, saying that we must be rid of all fond lusts, and that until all loftiness be pulled down in us, we can never come at our Lord Jesus Christ. But (as I have said already) they that have the office of teaching in the Church, ought to show the way of humbleness and

modesty: for have the excellentest of them all anything whereof they may boast? All that ever they have is of God's free goodness: and therefore, are they not the lewder if they exalt themselves for it? The unthankfulness of those that do so vaunt themselves, maketh them desirous to doff with their horns against God, and yet are they more bound to him than other men are. Wherefore let us do our endeavor that such corruption may be chased far from us, so as we may not respect any other thing, than that our Lord Jesus Christ may have all pre-eminence, and let such as are the excellentest suffer themselves to be abased, so the same may serve to the glorifying of God's majesty, and [to the enlarging of] the dominion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let all look at him, let all stick to him, and let all know that it is he from whom all goodness proceedeth. Lo whereunto Saint Paul meant to bring us. Now to the intent to make us the more to abhor all vainglory and pride against God, and the said desire of having credit among men: he saith *that we must not seek to bite one another, nother [neither] must we malice one another*. It is as much as if he had said that ambition or vaingloriousness cannot reign in us, but incontinently there will be heartburning, and every man will provoke his neighbor. For if we be given after that fashion to vainglory, every of us will covet to be greatest, and it will seem to himself that he hath not his right, till he see his neighbor brought in contempt. Thus ye see what pride bringeth. It tendeth not only to the advancing of a man's self against God: but also to the defacing of such as we ought to honor, at leastwise if they be our inferiors. For when we have looked well to all, it is certain that even the least sort ought to be honorable in our eyes. Therefore if we be led with ambition (as I said afore) every of us will be climbing to get higher and higher. Now hereof must needs spring strife and debate, heartburning, quarreling and contention, and finally deadly enmity. To be short, so long as ambition hath his full scope, and is let alone unbridled, we must needs be at war, as experience showeth too much, and would God that we might be fain [*willing*] to seek a great way off for examples of it. But so soon as men will needs set out themselves, ambition must needs carry them so away, as to show themselves enemies to their neighbors. And thereof also proceedeth envy. For it is said (<461304> 1 Corinthians 13:4) that charity is glad of other folks' welfare. Have not we cause to rejoyce, when we see God pour out of his gracious gifts upon our neighbors? yes: or else we pray not unfeignedly [*genuinely*] for all such as have need of them. For if it

grieve us to see that God granteth them to live commodiously and at their ease: do we not therein bewray [*reveal*] that there was nothing but hypocrisy and feignedness [*pretendedness*] in our prayers. Also if God give any man the gracious gifts of his holy spirit, it is for the common welfare and edifying of his Church. So then, in all respects there is cause for us to rejoice, and if we be rightly qualified according to God's will, we shall also therewithal love the profit and advancement of our neighbors. Contrariwise when every man is given to himself, and we be driven with this wicked ambition and pride: we can never look but askew at the advantage and profit of our neighbors. There will always be repining and spiting in our hearts, when God showeth himself bountiful towards those whom we would keep under feet.

Thus ye see that the thing which we have to remember in effect in this strain, is that we must learn what it is to belong to our Lord Jesus Christ, to the end that we take not his name in vain, ne [*nor*] be reproved of falsehood and leasing [*falsehood*] before God and his Angels, for glorifying ourselves so foolishly before men. For to the intent we may be our Lord Jesus Christ's, we must mortify our lusts and affections, knowing that of ourselves we be inordinately given to all evil, and our nature wholly inclined thereunto. Therefore it standeth us in hand to turn a new leaf. And of a truth that cannot be done of our own power: but the Son of God is Priest and ready to help us. What letteth [*hinders*] us to be made partakers of the gifts of God's holy Ghost, that we might prove by our life that we have a true belief in him? It is our flattering of ourselves in our own wretchedness. Then seeing there is nothing but corruption in us, let us learn to lament, and let us yield ourselves to our Lord Jesus Christ, that he may kill all wicked lusts and disordinate affections in us by the power of his death and passion. And therewithal let us consider the grace that God granteth us in that he will have us to serve him freely, so as we should no more be under the yoke of the Law to be pressed down by it to the uttermost (for that would be an intolerable burden to us): but be governed by his holy spirit, knowing that he alloweth of our life, and accepteth our service when it is so framed according to his word, although our zeal be not so real nor so substantial as were requisite. Let us know this: and therewithal let us walk in such wise, as our life may speak, and as our feet, hands, and all other our members and senses may show by effect, that as

we have been trained in the school of our Lord Jesus Christ: so we have also borne away his doctrine, and that the same hath taken root in us, not to lie hid still, but to yield forth fruit in such wise as God's name may be honored, and we show that we be not idle and unprofitable servants, but that we have been quickened by the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ and that it is he that governeth us, by reason whereof the fruit of it redoundeth immediately to our neighbors, insomuch that then God's name is so glorified by us, and we have yielded true proof of our Christianity, men know that whereas we were taught, it was to the end that all others should reap profit by it. For God hath a respect to the whole body of his Church, and like as he maketh his sun to shine both upon the good and bad: (<400545> Matthew 5:45) so will he have the faithful to do good to such as are not worthy of it. Therefore let us acquaint ourselves with it, and moreover acknowledge that we be nothing, and that all the goodness which we have is none of our own, but that we have it of God's mere grace. And forasmuch as we be not yet come to the perfection that were requisite, let us not surmise ourselves to be in God's favor for any other respect, than that he beareth with us till we be come into his kingdom, where we shall have the fullness of all holiness.

Now let us cast ourselves down before the Majesty of our good God, with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to make us so to feel them, as we may be sorry for them before him, yea even with a true repentance, and desire to be rid more and more of them, and practice the doctrine that we have heard, that whereas the blind and ignorant wretches do nowadays martyr and tire themselves to much in excess of their fond devotions: we may learn to hold ourselves to the pure simplicity of his word, knowing that there is none other rule but that, and that the same is it wherein he will have us to exercise ourselves, and whereunto it behooveth us to apply all our study: and thereby show that that is the mean whereby our Lord Jesus Christ will have us fashioned like to himself: and therefore let us go forward and travel unto him till we be thoroughly knit unto him, and in the end be come to the happy match at such time as he shall appear to our full redemption, and deliver us not only from this earthly pilgrimage, but also from all corruptions and all other things which hinder us from the full enjoying of the heavenly heritage. That it may please him to grant this grace not only to us, but also to all people, etc.